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of  
Working in the dividing of  
M 3126  
**PROTESTANTS.**

In order to the subverting of  
**Religion and our Laws**

For almost the space of 30 Years last  
past, plainly laid open.

With some Advices to Protestants of all Per-  
secutions in the present juncture of our Affairs.

*To which is added*

A Specimen of a BILL for Uniting of Protestants.

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By a Protestant and true English-man.

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*Every Kingdom divided against it self, is brought to De-  
struction; and every City or House divided against it  
shall not stand. Mat. 12. 25.*

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*Qui secutus est seculum, universi vincantur. Eccl. 1.*

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Printed in the Year 1689.

# THE

To publish in the division of

## PROTESTANTS

In conformity with the following of

Religion and our Laws

For the use of the space of 30 years

and, plainly laid open

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## The Mystery of Iniquity working in the dividing of Protestants, &c.

**T** HIS long since the *Court of England*, under the Authority of the late King and his Brother, was embark'd in a design of subverting the *Protestant Religion*, and of introducing and establishing *Papery*. For the two *Royal Brothers* being in the time of their Exile seduced by the Carelles and Importunities of their Mother, allured by the Promises and Favours of Popish Princes, and being wheedled by the Crafts and Arts of Priests and Jesuits, who are cunning to deceive, and knew how to prevail upon Persons that were but weakly established in the Doctrine, & wholly strangers to the Practice and Power of the Religion they were tempted from; they not only abjured the Reformed Religion, and became reconciled to the Church of *Rome*; but by their Example, and the Influence which they had over those that depended upon them, both for present Subsistence and future Hopes, they drew many that accompanied them in their Banishments, to renounce the Doctrine, Worship, and Communion of the Church of *England*, though in the War between *Charles* the First and the Parliament, they had pretended to fight for them in equal conjunction with the Prerogatives of the Crown. So that upon the Restoration in the Year 1660, they were not only moulded & prepared themselves for promoting the desires of the Pope and his Emisaries, but they were furnished with a stock of Gentlemen, out of whom they might have a supply of Interlocutors, both in Parliament and elsewhere; to co-operate with and under them in the Methods that should be judged most proper and subservient to the extirpation of Protestantism, and the bringing the Nation again into a Servitude to the Triple Crown. And besides the Obligations that the Principles

of the Religion to which they had revolted, laid them under for eradicating the established Doctrine and Worship, they had bound themselves unto it, by all the Promises and Oaths which Persons are capable of having proscribed unto, and exacted of them.

Nor can any now disbelieve his late Majesty's having lived and died a Papist, who hath either heard what he both said and did, when under the prospect of approaching Death, and past hope of acting a part any longer on the present Stage, or who have seen and read the two Papers left in his Closet, which have been since published to the World, and attested for Authentick by the present King. And had we been so just to our selves, as to have examined the whole Course of his Reign, both in his Alliances Abroad, and his most important Counsels and Actions at Home; or had we hearkned to the Reports of those who knew him at *Colen* and in *Flanders*, we had been long ago convinced of what Religion he was. Nor were his many repeated Protestations of his Zeal for Protestantism, but in order to delude the Nation, till insensibly as to us, and with safety to himself, he had overturned the Religion which he pretended to own, and had introduced that which he inveighed against. And while with the highest asseverations he disclaimed the being what he really was, and with most sacred and tremendous Oaths, professed the being what he was not, his Religion might in the mean time have been traced through all the signal Occurrences of his Government, and have been discerned written in Capital Letters, through all the material Affairs wherein he was engaged, from the Day he ascended the Throne, till the Hour he left the World. His entering into two Wars against the *Dutch*, without any provocation on their part, or ground on his, save their being a Protestant State; his being not only conscious unto, but interposing his Commands, as well as Encouragements, for the burning of *London*. His concurrence in all the parts of the Popish Plot, except that which the Jesuits, with a few others, were involved in against himself, his stifling that Conspiracy, and delivering the Roman Catholics from the Dangers into which it had cast them. His being the Author of so many forged Plots, which he caused to be charged on Protestants. His constant Confederacies with *France*, to the disobliging his People; the betraying of *Europe*; the neglect of the



the Reformed in that Kingdom, and the encouraging the Design carried on against them for their Extirpation. His entailing the Duke of *Tork* upon the Nation, contrary to the Desires and Endeavours of three several Parliaments; and that not out of Love to his Person, but Affection to Popery, which he knew that Gentleman would introduce and establish. All these, besides many other things which might be named, were sufficient Evidences of the late King's Religion; and of the Design he was engaged in for the Subversion of Ours. So that it would fill a sober Person with amazement, to think, that after all this, there should be so many sincere Protestants and true English Men, who not only believed the late King to be of the Reformed Religion, but with an insatiableness thirsted after the Blood of those that durst otherwise represent him. And had it not been for his receiving Absolution and Extream Unction from a Popish Priest at his Death; and for what he left in writing in the two Papers found in his *strong Box*, he would have still passed for a Prince who had lived and died a cordial and zealous Protestant, and whosoever had muttered any thing to the contrary, would have been branded for a Villain and an execrable Person. But with what a scent and odor must it recommend his Memory to them, to consider his having not only lived and died in the Communion of the Church of *Rome*, in contradiction to all his Publick Speeches, solemn Declarations, and highest Asseverations to his People in Parliament; but his participating, from time to time, of the Sacrament as administered in the Church of *England*, while in the interim he had abjured our Religion, stood reconciled to the Church of *Rome*, and had obliged himself by most sacred Vows, and was endeavouring, by all the Frauds and Arts imaginable, to subvert the established Doctrine and Worship, and set up Heresy and Idolatry in their room. And it must needs give them an abhorrent Idea and Character of Popery, and a loathsome representation of those trusted with the Conduct and Guidance of the Consciences of Men in the Roman Communion, that they should not only dispense with and indulge such Crimes and Villanies, but proclaim them Sanctified and Meritorious from the end which they are calculated for and levelled at.

And for his dear Brother, and renowned Successor, who possessed the Throne after him, I suppose his most partial Admirers,

-mirers, who took him for a Prince, not only merciful in his  
 Temper, and imbued with all gracious Inclinations to our Laws,  
 and the Rights of the Subject, but for one Orthodox in his Re-  
 ligion, and who would prove a zealous Defender of the Do-  
 ctrine, Worship, and Discipline of the Church established by  
 Law, are before this time both undeceived, and filled with Re-  
 sentments for his having abused their Credulity, deceived  
 their Expectations, and reproched all their gloryings and  
 boussings of him. For as it would have been the greatest Af-  
 front they could have put upon the King, to question his being  
 of the Roman Communion, or to detract from his Zeal for  
 the introduction of Popery, notwithstanding his own antecede-  
 dent Protestations, as well as the many Statutes in force for the  
 preservation of the Reformed Religion; so I must take the  
 liberty to tell them, that his Apostacy is not of so late a Date  
 as the World is made commonly to believe. For though it  
 was many Years concealed, and the contrary pretended and  
 dissimbled; yet it is most certain that he abjured the Prote-  
 stant Religion; soon after the Exilement of the Royal Family,  
 and was reconciled to the Romish Church at St. Germain in  
*France*. Nor were several of the then suffering Bishops and  
 Clergy ignorant of this, though they had neither the Integrity  
 nor Courage to give the Nation and Church warning of it.  
 And within these five Years there was in the custody of a very  
 worthy and honest Gentleman, a Letter written to the late Bi-  
 shop of D. by a Doctor of Divinity then attending upon the  
 Royal Brothers, wherein the Apostacy of the then Duke of  
 York to the Sea of *Rome* is particularly related, and an Account  
 given how much the Dutchess of *Trenouille* (who without be-  
 ing herself observed) had heard the Queen-Mother glorying  
 of it, bewailed it as a dishonour to the Royal Family, and as  
 that which might prove of pernicious Consequence to the Pro-  
 testant Interest. But though the old Queen privately rejoiced  
 and triumphed in it, yet she knew too well what disadvantage  
 it might be, both to her Son, and to the Papal Cause in *Great*  
*Britain*, to have it at that Season communicated and divulged.  
 Thereupon it remained a Secret for many Years, and by virtue of  
 a Dispensation he sometimes joined in all Ordinances with those  
 of the Protestant Communion. But for all the Art, Hypocrisy, of  
 and Sacrilege, by which it was endeavoured to be concealed, it

it might have been easily discerned, as manifesting it self in the whole Course of his Actions. And at last his own Zeal, the Importunity of the Priests, and the Cunning of the late King, prevailing over Reasons of State, he withdrew from all Acts of Fellowship with the Church of *England*. But neither that, nor his refusing the *Test* enjoined by *Law*, for distinguishing Papists from Protestants, though thereupon he was forced, both to resign his Office of Lord High Admiral, &c. nor his declining the Oath which the *Laws of Scotland* for the securing a Protestant Governour, enjoin to be taken by the High Commissioner; nor yet so many Parliaments having endeavoured to get him excluded from Succession to the Crown, upon the account of having revolted to the Sea of *Rome*, and thereby become dangerous to the established Religion, could make impression upon a wilfully deluded and obstinate sort of Protestants, but in defiance of all means of Conviction, they would persuade themselves, that he was still a Zealot for our Religion, and a grand Patriot of the Church of *England*. Nor could any thing undeceive them, till upon his Brother's Death he had openly declared himself a *Roman Catholick*, and afterwards in the fumes and raptures of his Victory over the late Duke of *Monmouth*, had discovered and proclaimed his Intentions of overthrowing both our Religion and Laws. Yea so closely had some sealed up their Eyes against all beams of Light, and hardened themselves against all Evidences from Reason and Fact, that had it pleased the Almighty God to have prospered the Duke of *Monmouth's* Arms in the Summer 85. the present King would have gone off the State with the Reputation among them, of a Prince tender of the Laws of the Kingdom; and who, notwithstanding his own being a Papist, would have preserved the Reformed Religion, and have maintained the Church of *England* in all her Grandure and Rights. And tho his whole Life had been but one continued Conspiracy against our Civil Liberties and Privileges, he had left the Throne with the Character, and under the Esteem of a Gentleman; that in the whole course of his Government would have regulated himself by the Rules of the Constitution, and the Statutes of the Realm.

Now among all the Methods fallen upon by the Royal Brothers, for the undermining and subverting our Religion and Laws, there is none that they have pursued with more Ardor,

and

and wherein they have been more successful to the compassing of their Designs, than in their dividing Protestants, and alienating their Affections, and embittering their Minds from and against one another. And had not this lain under their prospect, and the means of effecting it appeared easie, they might have been Papists themselves, while in the mean time they had been dispensed with to protest and swear their being of the Reformed Religion, and they might have envied our Liberties, and bewailed their Restriction from Arbitrary and Despotical Power; but they never durst have entertained a Thought of subverting the Established Religion, or of altering the Civil Government, nor would they ever have had the boldness to have attempted the introducing and erecting Popery and Tyranny in their room. And whosoever should have put them upon reducing the Nation to the Church of *Rome*, or upon rendring the Monarchy unlimited and independent on the Law, would have been thought to have laid a Snare for exposing the Papists to greater Severities than they were obnoxious unto before, and to have projected the robbing the Crown of the Prerogatives which belong unto it by the Rules of the Constitution, and to which it was so lately restored. And the despair of succeeding, would have rendred the Royal Brothers deaf to all Importunities from Romish Emisseries, and Court Minions. Neither the Promises and Oaths which they had made and taken beyond Sea to introduce Popery, nor their Ambition to advance themselves beyond the restraint of Law, and the Controul of Parliaments, would have prevailed upon them to have encountred the Hazards and Difficulties, which in case of the Union of English Protestants, must have attended and ensued upon Attempts and Endeavours of the one kind and of the other. Or should their beloved Popery, and their own Bigottedness in the Romish Superstition, have so far transported them beyond the bounds of Wisdom and Discretion, as to have appeared possessed with an Intention of subverting the Protestant Religion, and of enslaving the Nation to the Superstition and Idolatry of *Rome*, they would have been made soon to understand, That the Laws which make it Treason to own the Jurisdiction of the Pope, or to seduce the meanest Subject to the Church of *Rome*, were not enacted in vain, and that those as well as many more made for the Security



riety of the Protestant Religion, and to prevent the growth and introduction of Popery, were not to be dallied and plaid withal. Or, should they have been so far insatuated and abandoned of all Understanding, as out of a foolish and haughty Affectation of being absolute, to have attempted the Alteration of the Civil Government, they would have been immediately and unanimously told, that the People have the same Right to their Liberties, that the King hath to the Prerogatives of the Crown. And if they would not have been contented with what belongs unto the Prince by the Common and Statute Laws of the Realm, but had invaded the Privileges reserved unto the Subject : they would have been made to know, that they might not only be withstood in what they strove to usurp contrary to *Magna Charta*, the *Petition of Right*, and other Laws of the Kingdom, but that thereby they forfeited, and might be disseized of what either appertained unto the Crown by fundamental Agreements, or hath been since settled upon the Monarch by Statute-Laws. Nor could any thing have emboldned his late Majesty and the present King to Enterprizes of the one kind or the other, but the prospect of begetting a Misunderstanding, Jealousie, and Rancor among Protestants, and thereby both of making them instrumental to the Ruin of one another, and contributory to the loss of *English* Liberty and the Reformed Religion, which they equally value and esteem, and to the setting up Popery and Tyranny, which the one detesteth and abhorreth no less than the other.

Tho all English Protestants have ever been at an Accord in all the Essentials and Vitals of Religion, yet from the very beginning of the Reformation, there have been Differences among them concerning Ecclesiastical Government and Discipline, and about Forms, Rites, and Ceremonies of Worship. And had they consulted either their Duty to God, or the common Interest of Religion, they might have found ways either for removing the occasions of them, or they ought to have lived together as Brethren, notwithstanding the differences which were among them in those things. But how much wiser are the Children of this World, than those of the Kingdom of God and of Jesus Christ. For tho the differences among the Papists do far exceed ours, both in their number and in

the importance of those things wherein they disagree, yet they do mutually tolerate and bear with one another. The matters wherein they differ are neither made the Terms of their Church-Communion, nor the Grounds of mutual Excommunications and Persecutions.

But alas, one Party among us hath been always endeavouring to cut or stretch others to their own Size, and have made those things which themselves stile Indifferent, both the Qualifications for admission to the Pastoral Office, and the Conditions of Fellowship in the Ordinances of the Gospel. Nor is it to be expressed, what Advantages were hereby administred all along to the Common Enemy; and what Sufferings peaceable and orthodox Christians were exposed unto from their peevish and angry Brethren. And though these Things, with the Heats begotten among all, and the Calamities undergone by one side, were not the cause of that funestous War betwixt Charles the First and the *Parliament*, yet they were an occasion of diverting Thousands from the side which the Persecuting Church-men espoused, and engaging them in the behalf of the *two Houses*, in the Quarrel which they begun and carried on against that *Prince*, for defence of the Civil Liberties, Privileges, and Rights of the People. But some of the Mitred Clergy were so far from being made wise by their own and the Nations Sufferings, as upon their Restoration to hearken to moderate Counsels, and to decline their former Rigours and Severities, that they became the Tools and Instruments of the Court, not only for reviving, but for heightning and enflaming all the Differences which had formerly been among English Protestants. For the Royal Brothers finding nothing more adapted and subservient than this, to their Design of altering the Government, and subverting Religion, they animated those waspish and impolitick Ecclesiasticks, not only to pursue the Restoration of all those Things which had given Rise and Occasion to former Dissentions and Persecutions, but to lay new Snares for alienating many Persons, of unspotted Lives and tender Consciences, from the Church, and of rendring them obnoxious to suffer in their Names, Persons, and Estates. And what a satisfaction was it to the late King and his Brother, to find the old Episcopal Clergy prepared through Principles of Revenge, as well as from Love of Domination, Ambition, and

and Covetousness, to fall in with the Design, not only of increasing Divisions among Protestants, both by making the Conditions of entering upon the Pastoral Function narrower, and for screwing Conformity with the Church in her Forms and Ceremonies of Worship, into Tests, for admission to Magistracy and Civil Trusts, but of obtaining several Laws against Dissenters, whereby the Penalties to which they foresaw that People would become liable, were rendered greater than they had been before, and their Sufferings made more merciless, inhumane, and intolerable.

For though his late Majesty had, by a Declaration dated at *Breda*, promised Indulgence to all Protestants that would live peaceably under the Civil Government; yet it was never in his Thoughts to perform it; and the previous Obligations which he was under to the Church of *Rome*, had a virtue to supersede and cancel his Engagements to English Hereticks. And all he intended by that Declaration was only to wheedle and lull those into a tameness of admitting his return into his Dominions, whom a jealousy of being afterwards persecuted for their Consciences, might have awakened to withstand and dispute it. And, to give him his due, he never judged himself longer bound to the observation of Promises and Oaths made to his People, than, until without hazard to his Person and Government, he could violate and break them. Accordingly he was no sooner seated in the Throne of his Ancestors, and those whom he had been apprehensive of Resistance and Disturbance from, put out of Capacity and Condition of attempting any thing against him; but he thought himself discharged from every thing that the Royal Word and Faith of a Prince had been pledged and laid to stake for in that Declaration, and from that day forward acted in direct opposition to all the Parts and Branches of it. For having soon after his return obtained a Parliament moulded and adapted, both to his Arbitrary and Popish Ends, he immediately set all his Instruments at work for the procuring such Laws to be enacted, as might divide and weaken Protestants, and thereby make us, not only the more easy a Prey to the Papists, but afford them an advantage through our Scuffles, of undermining our Religion with the less notice and observation.

How such Persons came to be chosen, and to constitute the majority of the House of Commons, who by their Actings have made themselves infamous and execrable to all Ages, were a Matter too large to penetrate at present into the Reasons of; but that which my Theme conducts me to observe, is, That as they sacrificed the Treasure of the Nation to the Profuseness and Prodigality of the Prince, and our Rights and Liberties to his Ambition and Arbitrary Will, so they both introduced and established those Things which have been a means of dividing us; and by many severe and repeated Laws, they subjected a great number of industrious English-men and true Protestants, to Excommunications, Imprisonments, rigorous and multiplied Fines, and all this for Matters only relating to their Consciences, and for their Obedience to God in the Ordinances of his Worship and House. And notwithstanding the late King's often pretended compassion to the Dissenters, it will be hard to discern them, unless in Effects which proceed from very different and opposite Principles. The distance which he kept them from his Person and Favour; the influencing these Members of both Houses that depended upon him, to be the Authors and Promoters of Severities against them; the enjoining so often the Judges and Justices of Peace to execute the Laws upon them in their utmost rigour; the instigating the Bishops and Ecclesiastical Courts, if at any time they relented in their Prosecutions, to pursue them with fresh Citations and Censures; the arraigning them, not only upon the Statutes made intentionally against Dissenters, but upon those that were originally and solely enacted against the Papists; these, and other Procedures of that Nature, are the only Proofs and Evidences which I can find, of the late King's Bowels, Pity, and Tenderness to them. And whereas the weak Church-men were imposed upon to believe, that all the Severity against the Nonconformists, was the Fruit of his Zeal for the Protestant Religion, and for the security of the Worship and Discipline established by Law; they might have easily discovered, if Passion, Prejudice, Wealth and Honour had not blinded them, that all this was calculated for Ends perfectly destructive to the Church, and inconsistent with the Safety and Happiness of all Protestants. For as his seeking oftner than once to have wriggled himself into a Power of superceding and dispensing with those Laws and suspending



suspending their Execution, plainly shews that he never intended the support and preservation of the Church by them; so his non-execution of the *Laws* against Papists; his conniving at their encrease; his perswading those nearest unto him to reconcile themselves to the Sea of *Rome*, as he did, among others, the late Duke of *Monmouth*; his countenancing the Roman Catholicks in their open and intolerable Insolencies; and his advancing them to the most gainful and important Places and Trusts, sufficiently declare that he never had any love to Protestants, or care of the Reformed Religion; but that all his Designs were of a contrary Tendency, and his fairest Pretences for the Protection and Grandure of the Church of *England*, adapted to other Ends.

Thus the Royal Brothers having obtained such *Laws* to be enacted; whereby one Party of Protestants was armed with means of oppressing and persecuting all others, neither the necessity of their Affairs at any time since, nor the Application and Interposure of several Parliaments for removing the Grounds of our Differences and Animosities, by an Indulgence, to be past into a *Law*, could prevail, either upon his late Majesty, or the present King, to forgo the Advantage they had gotten of keeping us in mutual Enmity, and thereby of ministering to their projection of supplanting our Religion, and re-establishing the Faith and Worship of the Church of *Rome*. Hereupon the last King, not only refused to consent to such Bills as divers late Parliaments had prepared for indulging Dissenters, and for bringing them into an union of Counsels, and conjunction of Interest with those of the Church of *England*, for resisting the Conspiracies of the Papists against our legal Government and established Religion; but he rejected an Address for suspending the Execution of the *Penal Laws* against Dissenters, which was offered and presented unto him by that very Parliament which had framed and enacted those cruel and hard *Laws*.

And as the Royal Brothers have made it their constant Business to cherish a Division and Rancour among Protestants, and to provoke one Party to persecute and ruin another; so nothing could more naturally fall in with the Design of Arbitrariness, or be more subservient to the betraying the Nation to Papal Idolatry and Jurisdiction. For several *Penal Laws* against

against a considerable Body of People, do either expose them against whom they are enacted, to be destroyed by the Prince, with whom the executive Power of the *Law* is trusted and deposited; or they prove a Temptation to such as are obnoxious of resigning themselves in such a manner to the Will and Pleasure of the Monarch, for the obtaining his connivancy at their violation of the *Laws*, as is unsafe and dangerous for the common Liberty and Good of the Kingdom. For in case the Supreme Magistrate pursue an Interest distinct from, and destructive to that of his People, they who the *Law* hath made liable to be oppressed, are brought under Inducements of becoming so many Partisans for abetting him in his Designs, in hopes of being thereupon protected from the Penal Statutes, the execution whereof is committed to him. And as it is not agreeable to the Wisdom and Prudence which ought to be among Men, nor to the Mercy and Compassion which should be among Christians, for one Party to surrender another into the Hands and Power of the Sovereign, to be impoverished and ruined by him at his pleasure, especially when those whom they give up to be thus treated and entertained, are at agreement with them in all the Essentials of Religion, equally zealous as themselves for the Liberties of their Country; and who, for Sobriety in their Lives, Industry in their Callings, and Usefulness in the Common-Wealth, are inferior to none of their Fellow-Subjects: So it is obvious to any who give themselves leave to think, that the King would long ere this have been stated in the Absoluteness that is aspired after, and both Church and State reduced to lie at the discretion of the Monarch, provided the Nonconformists, for procuring his Favour in non-execution of the *Laws*, had suffered themselves to be prevailed upon, and drawn over to stand by and assist him in his Popish and Despotical Designs.

But that honest People, though hated and maligned by their Brethren, rather than be found aiding the King in his Usurpations over the Kingdom, have chosen to undergo the utmost Calamities they could be made subject unto, either through the Execution of those *Laws* which had been made against them, or through our Princes and their Ministers wrecking their Malice upon them in Arbitrary and Illegal Methods. But what the Royal Brothers could not work the afflicted and persecuted

fecuted Side unto, they found the Art to engage the other Side in, tho not only excepted from all Obnoxiousness to those Laws, but strengthened and supported by them. For as soon as the Court began to despair of prevailing upon Dissenters to become their Tools and Instruments of enslaving the Nation, and of exalting the Monarchy to a despotical Absoluteness, they applied to the Bigots of the Church of *England*; whom by gratifying with a vigorous Execution of the Laws upon Dissenters, they brought to abet, applaud, and justify them in all those Counsels and Ways which have reduced us into that miserable condition wherein we not long since were. The Clergy being advanced to Grandure and Opulency, things which many of them are fonder of, and loather to forgo than Religion and the Rights of the Nation, the Court made it their business to possess them with a Belief, that unless the Fanaticks were suppressed and ruined; they could not enjoy with Security their Dignities and Wealth. Whereupon not only the lesser Levites, but the Superior Clergy having their Lesson and Cue given them from *White-hall* and *St. James's*, fell upon pursuing the Nonconformists with Ecclesiastical Punishments, and upon exciting and animating the Civil Officers against them. And under pretence of preserving and defending the Church, they gave themselves over to an implicit serving of the Court, and became not only Advocates but Instruments for the robbing of Corporations of their Charters, for imposing Sheriffs upon the City of *London* who had not been legally elected, and of fining and punishing Men arbitrarily for no Crime, save the having asserted their own and the Nations Rights in modest and lawful ways. Posterity will hardly believe that so many of the Prelatical Clergy, and so great a number of Members of the Church of *England*, should from an Enmity unto, and pretended Jealousie of the Dissenters, have become Tools under the late King for justifying the Dissolution of so many Parliaments, the Invasion made upon their Priviledges, the ridiculing and stifling of the Popish Plot, the shamming of forged Conspiracies upon Protestants, the condemning several to Death for High-Treason, who could be rendred guilty by the Transgression of no known Law, and finally for advancing a Gentleman to the Throne, who had been engaged in a Conjururation against Religion and the Legal Government, and whom

whom three several Parliaments would have therefore excluded from the Right of Succession. And being seduced into an espousal of the Interests of the Court against Religion, Parliaments, and the Nation, it is doleful to consider what Doctrines both from Pulpit and Press were thereupon brought forth and divulged. Such as Monarchy's being a Government by Divine Right; that it is in the Prince's Power to rule as he pleaseth; that it is a Grace and Condescension in the King to give an account of what he does; that for Parliaments to direct, or regulate the Succession, borders upon Treason, and is an Offence against the Law of Nature; and that the only thing left to Subjects, in case the King will tyrannize over their Consciences, Persons, and Estates, is tamely to suffer, and as some of them did absurdly express it, to exercise Passive Obedience. So that by corrupting the Minds and Consciences of Men with those pestilent and slavish Notions, they betrayed the Nation both to the Mischiefs which have already overtaken us, and to what further we were threatned with. Nor did these Doctrines tend merely to the fettering and enfeebling the Spirits of Men, but they were a Temptation to the Royal Brothers to put in Execution what they had been so long contriving and travelling with, and were a kind of reprimanding them for being ignorant of their own Right and Power, and for not exerting it with that Vigor and Expedition which they might. I do acknowledg that there were many both of the Sacred Order, and of the Laick Communion of the Church of *England*, who were far from being infected with those brutish Sentiments and Opinions, and who were as zealous as any for having the Monarchy kept within its ancient limits; Parliaments maintained in their wonted Reverence and Authority; the Subjects preserved in the enjoyment of their immemorial Priviledges; and who were far from sacrificing our Religion and Laws to Popery and Arbitrariness; and from lulling us into a Tameness and Lethargy, in case the Court should attempt the abolishing the established Doctrine and Worship, and the subverting and changing the Civil Government. But alas! besides their being immediately branded with the Name of *Trimmer* and conformable *Fanaticks*, and registred in the Kalender with those that stood precluded the King's Favour, and merited his Animadversion; their



Modesty was soon drowned and silenced in the loud Noise of their clamorous Brethren, and their retiredness from Conversation, while the others frequented all places of Society and publick Concourse, deprived the Nation of the benefit of their Example, and the happiness of their Instructions. Nor have I mentioned the Extravagancies of any of the Ecclesiasticks and Members of the Church of *England*, with a design either of reproaching and upbraiding them, or of provoking and exasperating the Dissenters to Resentments, but only to shew how fatal our Divisions have been unto us, what Excesses they have occasioned our being hurried and transported into, and what mischievous Improvement our Enemies have made of them, to the supplanting and almost subverting of all that is valuable unto us, as we are English-men, Christians, and Protestants.

And as our Animosities, through our Divisions, gave the Court an advantage of suborning that Party, which they pretended to befriend and uphold, into a Ministration to all their Counsels, and Projections against our Religion and Laws; so by reason of the unnatural Heats wherewith Protestants have been enflamed and enraged against Protestants, many weak, ungrounded, and unstable Souls, have been tempted to question the Truth of our Religion, and to apostatize to the Church of *Rome*, and thereupon have become united in Inclination, Power, and endeavours with the Court, and our old Enemies the Papists, for the extirpation of Protestantcy, and the alteration of the Government. As it hath been matter of Offence and Scandal to all Men, so it hath been ground of stumbling and falling unto many, to see those who are professedly of the same Religion, to be mutually embittered against one another, and so far transported with Malice and Rage, as to seek and pursue each others Destruction. For such a Carriage and Behaviour are so contrary to the Spirit and Principles of Christianity, and to the Genius and Temper of true Religion; that it is no marvel if Persons ignorant of the Holy Scriptures, and strangers to the converting and comforting Vertue of the Doctrine of the Gospel asserted in our Confessions, and insisted upon by our Divines, should suspect the Orthodoxy of that Religion which is accompanied with so bitter Fruits, even in the Dispensers of the Word as well as in others, and betake  
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themselves to the Communion of that Church, where how many and important soever their Differences be one with another, yet they do not break forth into those Flames of excommunicating and persecuting each other, that ours have done. How have some among us, through having their Spirits fretted and exasperated by the craft and cunning of our Enemies, not only loaded and stigmatized their Brethren and fellow-Protestants with Crimes and Names, which were they true and deserved, would justly render us a loathing and an Abomination to Mankind, but have libelled and branded those whom God had honoured to be Instruments of the Reformation, with Appellations and Characters fit to beget a detestation of their Doctrine as well as their Memory. The worst that the Papists have forged and vomited out against *Luther, Zwinglius, Calvin, &c.* hath been raked up and repeated to the disparagement of the Reformation, and to the scandalizing the Minds of weak Men against it. And as the Jesuits and Priests have improved those Slanders and Calumnies to the Seduction of divers from the Church of *England*, and to a working them over to a Reconciliation with the Church of *Rome*; so the Court hath thereby had an increase of their Faction and Party against our Religion and Liberties, and have been enabled to muster Troops of *Janisaries* for their Despotical and Unlimited Claim.

Nor have our Divisions, with the Heats, Animosities, Revilings, and Persecutions that have ensued thereupon, proved only an occasion of the Seduction of several from our Religion, and of their Apostacy to Popery, but they have been a main spring and source of the Debauchery, Irreligion, and Atheism, which have overspread the Nation, and have brought so many both to an indifferency and unconcernedness for the Gospel, and all that is virtuous and noble, and have disposed them to fall in with those that could countenance and protect them in their Impiety and Prophaneness, and feed their Luxury and Pride with Honour and Gain. What a woful Scheme of Religion have we afforded the World! and how shamefully have we painted forth and represented the holy Doctrine of the blessed Jesus, while we have not only lived in a direct opposition to all the Commands of Meekness, Love, and mutual forbearance which our Religion lays us under the Authority of, but

but have neglected to practise good manners, to observe the Rules of Civility, to treat one another with common Humanity, and to do as we would be done unto? While we have been more offended at what seemed to supplant our Dominations and Grandures, than at what dishonoured God and reproached the Gospel; while we weighed not so much whether they whom we took into our sacred Communion, as well as into our personal Friendship, were conformable in their Lives to the Scripture, as whether they complied with the Canons of the Church, while we reprobated all that were not of our way, though never so virtuous and devout, and fainted all that were, though never so wicked and prophane; while we branded such for Fanaticks, whom we could justly charge with nothing, save the not admitting that into Religion which came not from the Divine Author of it; and hugged those for good and Orthodox Believers, that would sooner consult the Statute-Book for their Practice in the Worship of God, than the Bible; while we haled those to Prison and spoiled them of their Estates, to whom nothing could be objected, except their being too precise and consciencious, in avoiding that, through fear and apprehension of sinning, which others had a liberty and latitude to do, as judging it lawful, and in the mean time esteemed those worthy of the chiefest Trusts in the Church and Common-wealth, whose Folly and Villanies made them unfit for Civil Societies; while they who lived most agreeably to the Laws of God and the Example of Christ, were persecuted as Enemies to Religion and the Pests of the Kingdom, and in the interim too many of the very Clergy were not only Countenancers of the most profligate Persons as their best Friends, but joined and assisted in scandalous Debaucheries, under pretence of sustaining the Honour of their Tribe, and doing Service to the Church. I say, while these were the unhappy, but too obvious Fruits of our Divisions, and of the bitter Heats that accompanied them, how was the Reverence for the Sacred Order lessened and diminished, the Veneration for Religion weakned and lost, the Shame and Dread of appearing prophane and wicked, removed and banished; and such who took the measures of Christianity from the Practices of those that were stiled Christians, rather than

from the immaculate and holy Scriptures, tempted to think all Religion a Juggle, and Priesthood but an Artifice and Craft to compass Honour and Wealth. And though nothing but a shortness of Understanding, and an immoderate Love to their Lusts, could occasion the drawing such a Conclusion from the foregoing Premises, yet I must needs grant that there was too just a ground administred unto them of saying, that many did not believe that themselves, the Faith whereof they recommended to others. But that which I would more particularly observe is, that it is from among those, who by the foregoing occasions have been tempted to Debauchery and Irreligion, that the *Romish* Emisaries have made the Harveſt of Profelytes and Converts to the Church of *Rome*. For as they who fear not God will, be easily brought to imitate *Cæſar*; and such who are of no Religion will, in subserviency to Secular Ends, assume the Mask and Profession of any: so Popery is extremely adapted to the Wishes and Desires of wicked and profane Men, in that it provides for their living as enormously as they please here, and flatters them with hopes and assurances of Blessedness hereafter. They who can be ascertained of going to Heaven upon their confessing their Sins to a Priest, and their receiving Absolution, the Eucharist and Extream Unction, need not look after Repentance towards God, Conversion to Holiness, nor a Life of Faith, Love, Mortification and Obedience, which the Protestant Religion, upon the Authority of the Gospel, obligeth them unto, in order to the obtaining of Eternal Happiness. And as the late Apostates to Popery in *England*, are chiefly such who were notorious for Looseness, Prophaneness and Immorality, and were the Scandal of our Religion while they professed it; and while in our Church, were not properly of it: so it is from among Men of this stamp and character, that their late Majesties have found Persons assisting and subservient to their Despotical and Arbitrary Designs. For whosoever takes a Survey of the Court-Faction, and considereth who have been the Advocates for Enroachments upon our Liberties, and Abettors of Usurpations over our Rights, they will find them to have been principally the profligate and debauched among the Nobility and Gentry, the mercenary, ignorant and scandalous among the Clergy,



Clergy, the Off-scouring and such as are an Ignominy to Human Nature among the Yeomanry and Peasants. And it was in order to this villanous End, that the Royal Brothers have endeavour'd so industriously to debauch the Nation, and have made Sensuality and Profaneness the Qualifications for Preferment, and the Badges of Loyalty. And if among those that appear for the Preservation of the Liberties of their Country, there be any that deserve to be stiled Enemies to Religion and Vertue, as I dare affirm that they owe their Immoralities to Court-Education, Converse and Example; so I hope that though they have not hitherto been all of them so happy as to have left their Vices where they learned them, yet that they will not continue to disparage the good Cause which they have espoused with an unfutable Life, nor give their Adversaries reason to say, that while they pretend to seek the Reformation of the State, they are both the Deriders of Sobriety and Vertue, without which no Constitution can long subsist, and guilty of such horrid Oaths, Cursing, Imprecations, Blasphemies and Uncleanesses, which naturally, as well as morally and meritoriously, dispose Nations to Subversion and Extirpation.

Finally, Being through the bitter Effects which have ensued upon our Divisions, made apprehensive and jealous one of another, it hath from thence come to pass, that while the Care of the Conformists hath been to watch against the growth of the Dissenters; and the sollicitude of the Nonconformists hath been, how to prevent the Rage of the biggotted Church-men, the Papists, in the mean time, without being heeded or observed, have both incredibly multiplied, and made considerable Advances in their designs of ruining us. For whensoever the Court was to take a signal step towards Popery and Arbitrary Power, there was a clamour raised of some menacing Boldness of the Dissenters. And if the Nation grew at any time alarmed, by reason of the Favour shewn to the Roman Catholics, and of some visible Progress made towards the King's becoming Despotical, all was immediately hush'd with a shout and cry of the Government and Church's being in imminent hazard from the Dissenters. Yea, whensoever the Papists and their Royal Patrons stood detected, of having been  
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conspiring against our Religion and Civil Liberties, all was diverted and stilled, by putting the Kingdom upon a false Scent, and by hounding out their Beagles upon the Nonconformists. So that the Eyes and Minds of Protestants being employed in reference to what was to be apprehended and feared from one another, the working of our Popish Enemies either escaped our Observation, or were heeded by most, only with a superficial and unaffective Glance. And while our Church-men stood prepossessed by the Court, with a dread and jealousy of the Dissenters, all that was said and written of a Conspiracy carried on by the Papists against our *Laws and Religion*, was entertained and represented by the prejudiced Clergy, as an Artifice only of the Dissenters for compassing an Indulgence from the Parliament, which in case such a Plot had obtained the belief, that a Matter of so great Danger and Consequence required, would have been easily granted, being the only rational Expedient for the preservation of the established Religion and the legal Government. Nor did our Enemies question but that having enflamed our Divisions, and raised our Animosities to so great a height, rather than the one Party would lay aside their Severities, and the other let fall their Resentments, we would even be contented to lie at their Mercy, and submit our selves to the Pleasure and Discretion of the Court and Papists. And there have not wanted some peevish, foolish, and ill Men of both Parties, who rather than sacrifice their Spleen and Passion, and abandon their particular Quarrels for the Interest and Safety of the whole, have been inclined to expose the Protestant Religion and English Liberties, to the Hazards wherewith they were apparently threatned, and to suffer all Extremities, meerly to have the satisfaction of seeing those whom they respectively hate, involved with them under the same Miseries. But as this was such a degree of Madness and Infatuation, as could proceed from nothing but brutish Rage, and argues no less than a Divine *Nemesis*; so, I hope, they are but few that now stand infected with these passionate Sentiments and Inclinations, and remain thus hardened in their mutual Prejudices. And to those I have nothing to say, nor the least Advice to administer, but shall leave them to their own Follies, as Persons to whose Conviction no Discourse, though

though never so rational, can be adapted, and whom only Stripes can work upon.

'Tis to such therefore as are capable of hearkning to Reason, and who are ready to embrace any Counsel that shall be found adjusted to the Common Interest, that I am to address what remains to be represented and said in the following Leaves. For all Parties of Protestants having seen how far our Enemies have improved our Divisions and Rancours, to the compassing their wicked and ambitious Designs, and the robbing us of all that good and generous Men account valuable; they are at last convinced of the necessity we have been and are reduced unto, of altering the measures of our acting towards one another, and both of laying aside our Persecutions, and of exchanging our Wranglings among our selves, into a joint contending for the Faith of the Gospel, and the Rights of the Nation. For what the Gentleman, so lately in the Throne, intends and aims at, is not any longer matter of meer Suspicion and Jealousy, but of demonstrable Evidence and unquestionable Certainty.

His Mask and Vizard of Zeal for the preservation of the Church of *England*, and of tender regard for the Laws of the Land, were laid by and put off, and his Resolutions of governing Arbitrarily, and of introducing Popery, were become obvious to all Men, whom Reason and Sense have not forsaken and left.

The Papists, whom it was thought much, a while ago, to see connived at in the exercise of their Worship in private Houses, are allowed now to practise their Idolatry openly in our chief Towns, and in the Metropolitan City of the Kingdom to usurp the publick Churches and Cathedrals. Those Catholic Gentlemen, whom heretofore it was matter of surpris to see countenanced with the private Favour of the Prince, are now advanced to the supreme Commands in the Army, and the principal Trust in Civil Affairs. The Recusant Lords, whose enlargement out of the *Tower*, we could not but look upon as an unpresided Violation, both of the Laws of the Land, and of the Rights and Jurisdiction of Parliament, being committed thither by the Authority of the House of Lords, upon a Charge and Impeachment of High Treason, by the  
Commons.

Commons of *England* in Parliament assembled, were now honoured to be Members of the Privy Council, and exalted to be chief Ministers of State. They whom the Statutes of the Realm make subject to the severest Penalties for Apostacy to *Rome*, are not only protected from the edg of the Laws, but maintained in Parochial Incumbencies, and Headships of Colledges.

Our Orthodox Clergy are not only inhibited to preach against Popery, but are illegally Reprimanded, Silenced, and Suspended, for discharging that Duty which their Consciences, Offices, Oaths, and the Laws of the Kingdom oblige them unto. And such whom neither the Ecclesiastical nor *Westminster* Courts can arraign and proceed against, we had a new Court of Inquisition erected for the adjudging and punishing of them. So that it is not the Dissenters who are the only Persons to be struck at and ruined, but the Conformists are to be treated after the same manner, and to share in the common Lot whereunto all honest and sincere Protestants are destined and designed. Even they who were the Darlings of *Whitchhall* and *St. Jameses*, and recompensed with Honours and Titles for betraying the Rights and Priviledges of Corporations, persecuting Dissenters, and heading Addresses, wherein Parliaments were reproached, the Course of Justice against Popish Offenders was slandered, the illegal and arbitrary procedures of the Court applauded and justified, and all that were zealous for our Laws and Liberties stigmatized with the Names of *Villains* and *Traitors*, are now themselves, for but discouraging Popish Assemblies, and attempting to put the Laws in execution against Priests who had publicly celebrated Mass, not only check'd and rebuked, but punished with Seisfure and Imprisonment.

Nor are our Religion and Civil Liberties meerly supplanted and undermined by illegal Tricks, glossed over with the Varnish of judicial Forms, but they are assaulted and battered in the face of the Sun, without so much as a palliation to give their procedures a plausible figure. And the King being brought to a despair of managing the Parliament to his barefaced Purposes of Popery and Arbitrariness, and of prevailing with them to establish Tyranny and Idolatry by Law, notwithstanding their



their having been as industriously pack'd and chosen to answer such a Design, as Art, Bribery and Authority could reach; and notwithstanding their having been obsequious in their last Session to an excess that has proved unsafe to themselves & the Nation, he became resolved not to allow them to meet any more, but to set up *à la mode de France*, and to have his personal Commands, seconded with the Assent of his *durant-leurs-plaisirs* Judges, to be acknowledged and obeyed for Laws, so that they who were formerly seduced into a good Opinion of him, are not only undeceived, but provoked to warm Resentments, for having had their credulity and easiness of belief so grossly abused. And as the converting so vast a number of well-meaning, but woefully deluded People, who had suffered themselves to be hoodwink'd, and fatally hurried to betray their Religion, Country, and Posterity, to the Ambition and Popish Bigottry of the Court, was a design becoming the Compassion, Mercy and Wisdom of God; so the Method's and Means whereby they are come to be enlightned and proselyted, are a signal vindication of the Sapience and Righteousness of God in all those tremendous Steps of his Providence, by which our Enemies have been emboldned to detect and discover themselves. For though their continuing so long to have a good opinion of the present King, and their abetting him so far in the undermining our Religion, and invading our Liberties, may seem to have proceeded not so much from their Ignorance, as from their Obstinacy and Malice: yet God, who penetrates into the Hearts of Men, may have discovered some degrees of sincerity in their Pretensions and Carriages, though accompanied with a great deal of folly and wantonness. Nor are the Lord's ways like to ours, to give Persons over as unteachable and incorrigible, upon their withstanding every measure of light, and the resisting even those Means which were sufficient and proper for their Conviction; but he will try them by new and extraordinary Methods, and see whether feeling and dolorous Experience may not convert those, upon whom Arguments and moral Evidence could make no impressions. And there being among those formerly misled and deluded Protestants, many who retained a Love for their Country, a Care for their Posterity, and a Zeal for the Gospel and Reformed Religion,

even when their Actions imported the contrary, and seem'd to betray them; the singling and weeding out such from among the Court-Faction and Party, is a compensation both for the defeatment of all endeavours, for the prevention of the Evils that have overtaken us, and for the Distresses and Calamities under which we do at present lie and groan. And if there be joy in Heaven upon the conversion of a Sinner, with what thankfulness to God, and joy in themselves, should they who have so many Years wrestled against the encroachments of Popery and Arbitrariness, and who have deeply suffered in their Names, Persons and Estates upon that account, welcome and embrace their once erring and misled, but now enlightned, reclaimed and converted Brethren? And instead of remembering or upbraiding them with the opposition and rancour which they expressed against our Persons, Principles, and Ways, let there be no Language heard from us, but what may declare the joy we have in our selves for their conversion, and the entire trust and confidence which we put in them.

The first Duty incumbent therefore upon Dissenters towards those of the Church of *England*, is to believe, that notwithstanding there have been many of them so long Advocates and Partisans for the Court, through ignorance of what was aimed at and intended, they are nevertheless as really concerned as any others, and as truly zealous for the preservation of the Protestant Religion, and for maintaining the legal Rights and Liberties of the Subject, and when occasion shall offer, will approve themselves accordingly. 'Tis a ridiculous, as well as a mischievous Fancy, for one Party to confine all Religion only to themselves, or to circumscribe all the ancient English Ardor for the common Rights of the Nation, to such as are of their particular Fellowship and Perswasion, there being sincere Christians, and true Englishmen among those of all Judgments and Societies of Protestants, and among none more than those of the Communion of the Church of *England*. It were the height of Wickedness, as well as the most prodigious Folly, to imagine that the *Conformists* have abandoned all Fidelity to God, and cast off all Care of themselves and their Country, upon a mistaken Judgment of being Loyal and Obedient to the King. The contrary is plain enough; they knew as well as any, that  
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the giving to *Cesar* the Things that are *Cesar's*, lay them under no Obligation of surrendring unto him the Things that are God's; nor of sacrificing unto the Will of the Sovereign the Priviledges reserved unto the People by the Fundamental Rules of the Constitution, and by the Statutes of the Realm. And they understand, as well as others, that the Laws of the Land are the only Measures of the Prince's Authority, and of the Subjects Fealty; and where they give him no Right to Command, they lay them under no tie to Obey. And though here and there a Dissenter has written against Popery with good Success, yet they have been mostly Conformable Divines, who have triumphed over it in elaborate Discourses, and who have beaten the Romish Scriblers off the Stage. Nor can it be thought that they who have so accurately related and vindicated the History, and asserted and defended the Doctrine of the Reformation, should either tamely relinquish, or be wanting in all due and legal Ways to uphold and maintain it. And though some few of the Nonconformists have, with sufficient strength and applause, used their Pens against Arbitrariness, in detecting the Designs of the Royal Brothers, yet they who have generally, and with greatest Honour, appeared for our Laws and Legal Government, against the Invasions and Usurpations of the Court, have been Theologues and Gentlemen of the Church of *England*. Nor in case of further Attempts for altering the Constitution, and enslaving the Nation, will they shew themselves unworthy the having descended from Ancestors, whose Motto in the high Places of the Field was, *nolumus Leges Anglia mutari*. They who have so often justified the Arms of the *United Netherlands* against their Rightful Princes the Kings of *Spain*, and so unanswerably vindicated their casting off Obedience to those Monarchs, when they had invaded their Privileges, and attempted to establish the *Inquisition* over them, cannot be ignorant what their own Right and Duty is in behalf of the Protestant Religion and English Liberties; for the Security whereof, we have not only so many Laws, but the Coronation Oaths, and Stipulations of our Kings.

And those Gentlemen of the Church of *England*, who appeared so vigorously in three Parliaments for excluding the

Duke of York, from the Succession to the Crown, by reason of a jealousy of what, through being a Papist, he would attempt against our Religion and Priviledges, in case he were suffered to ascend the Throne; cannot be now to seek what becomes them towards him, having seen and felt what before they only apprehended and feared. For if the Law that entail-eth the Succession upon the next of Kin, and obligeth the Subjects to admit and receive him, not only may, but ought to be dispensed with, in case the Heir, thro' having imbib'd Principles which threaten the Safety, and are inconsistent with the Happiness of the People, hath made himself incapable to inherit; we know, by a short Ratiocination, how far we stand bound to a Prince on the Throne, who by transgressing against the Laws of the Constitution, hath abdicated himself from the Government, and stands virtually Deposed. For whosoever shall offer to rule Arbitrarily, does immediately cease to be King, *de jure*, seeing by the Fundamental, Common, and Statute Laws of the Realm, we know none for Supream Magistrate and Governor, but a limited Prince, and one who stands circumscribed and bounded in his Power and Prerogative.

And should the Dissenters entertain a belief that the Conformists are less concerned and zealous than themselves for the Protestant Religion, and Laws of the Kingdom, they would not only sin, and offend against the Rules of Charity, but against the Measures of Justice, and daily Evidences from Matters of Fact. For neither they, nor we, owe our Conversion to God, and our practical Holiness to the Opinions about Discipline, Forms of Worship, and Ceremonies, wherein we differ, but the Doctrines of Faith and Christian Obedience, wherein we agree. 'Tis not their being for a Liturgy, a Surplice, or a Bishop, that hath heretofore influenced them to subserve the Court in Designs tending to Absoluteness, but they were seduced unto it, upon Motives whereof they are now ashamed; and the ridiculousness and folly of which they have at last discovered. Nor is the multitude of profligate and scandalous Persons, with which the Church of England is crowded, any just impeachment of the Purity of her Doctrine in the Vitals and Essentials of Religion, or of the Vertue and Piety of many of  
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her Members. For as it is her being the only Society established by Law that attracts those Vermin to her Bosom, so it is her being restrained by Law from debarring them, that keeps them there to her reproach, and to the grief of many of her Ecclesiastics. Neither is it the fault of the Church of *England*, that the Agents and Factors for Popery and Arbitrary Power, have chosen to pass under the Name of *her Sons*; but it proceeds partly from their Malice, as hoping by that means to disgrace her with all true English-men, as well as with Dissenters; and partly from their Craft, in order thereby the better to conceal their Design, and to throwd themselves from the Censure and Punishment; which had it not been for that Mask, they would have been exposed unto, and have undergone. And I dare affirm, that besides the Obligations from Religion, which the Conformists are equally under with Dissenters, for hindring the introduction of Popery, there are several Inducements from interest which sway them to prevent its establishment, wherein the Dissenters are but little concerned. For though Popery would be alike afflictive to the Consciences of Protestants of all Persuasions, yet they are Gentlemen, and Ministers of the Church of *England*, whose Livings, Revenues, and Estates have been threatned in case it had come to be established.

Nor would the most Loyal and obsequious Levites, provided they resolve to continue Protestants, be willing that their Personages and Incumbencies, to which they have no less Right by Law, than the King hath to the Excise and Customs, should be taken from them and bestowed upon Romish Priests, by an Act of Despotical Power, and of unlimited Prerogative. And for the Gentlemen, as I think few of them would hold themselves obliged to part with their Purfes to High-way Padders, though such should have a Patent from the King to rob whomsoever they met upon the Road; so there will not be many inclined to suffer their Manours and Abbey-Lands, to which they have so good a Title, to be ravished from them either by Monks or Janzaries, though authorised thereunto by the Prince's Commission. Even they who had formerly suffered themselves to be seduced, to prove, in a manner, Betrayers of the Rights and Religion of their Country, will now (being undeceived) not only

only in conjunction with others, withstand the Court in its prosecution of Popish and Arbitrary Designs; but through a generous exasperation, for having been deluded and abused, will judg themselves obliged, in vindication of their Actions before, to appear for the Protestant Religion, and the Laws of *England*, with a Zeal equal to that wherewith they contributed to the undermining and supplanting of them. For they are not only become more sensible than they were of the Mischiefs of Absolute Government, so as for the future to prize and assert the Priviledges reserved unto the People by the Rules of the Constitution, and chalk'd out for them in the Laws of the Land; but they have such a fresh view of Popery, both in its Heresies, Blasphemies, Superstitions, and Idolatries; and in the Treachery, Sanguinariness, Violence and Cruelty which the Papal Principles mould, Influence, and oblige Men unto; that they not only entertain the greatest abhorrency and detestation imaginable for it, but seem resolv'd not to cherish in their Bosom, a Thing so abominable to God, execrable to good Men, and destructive to Humane as well as to Christian Societies.

Nor are the Dissenters meerly to believe that the Conformists are equally zealous as themselves for the Reformed Religion, and English Rights, but they are to consider them as the only great and united Body of Protestants in the Kingdom, with whom all other Parties compar'd bear no considerable proportion. For though the Nonconformists, considered abstractly, make a vast number of honest and useful People, yet being laid in the Scale with those of the Episcopal Communion, they are but few, and lie in a little room. And whosoever will take the pains to ballance the one against the other, even where Dissenters make the greatest Figure, and may justly boast of their Multitude, they will soon be convinced that the number of the other doth far transcend and exceed them. And if it be so in Cities and Corporations, where the greatest Bulk of Dissenters are, it is much more so in Country Parishes, where the latter bear not the proportion of one to a hundred. Nor doth the Church of *England* more exceed the other Parties in her number, than she doth in the quality of her Members. For whereas they who make up and constitute the separate Societies,

ties, are chiefly Persons of the middle Rank and Condition; the Church of *England* doth in a manner vouch, and claim all the Persons of Honour, of the Learned Professions, and such as have valuable Estates, for her Communicants. And though the other sort are as necessary in the Common-Wealth, and contribute as much to its Strength, Prosperity, and Happiness, yet they make not that Figure in the Government, nor stand in that Capacity of having influence upon Publick Affairs. For not only the Gentlemen of both the Gowns, who by reason of their Calling and Learning are best able to defend our Religion, and vindicate our Laws and Priviledges with their Tongues and Pens, but they whose Estates, Reputation, and Interests, recommendeth them to be elected Members of the great Senate of the Nation, as well as they, who by reason of their Honours and Baronages, are Hereditary Legislators, are generally, if not all, of the Communion of the Church of *England*. So that they who conform to the established Worship and Discipline, are to be look'd upon and acknowledged as the great Bulwark of the Protestant Religion in *England*, and the Hedge and Fence of our Civil Liberties and Rights.

And though it be true, that this great Breach made upon our Religion and Laws is fallen out under their hand, while the poor Dissenters had neither acceſſion to, nor were in a condition to prevent; it yet ſeemeth their own Conſciences do ſufficiently load and charge them for it with Shame and Ignominy, it were neither candid, nor at this Juncture ſeaſonable to upbraid it to them, or improve it to their Diſhonour and Reproach. For as they have tamely look'd on and conniv'd till our Religion and Liberties are ſo far undermined and ſupplanted; ſo it is they alone who have been in a condition of ſtemming the Inundation of Idolatry and Tyranny, with which we were threatned, and of repairing our Breaches, and reducing the Prerogative to its old Channel, and making Popery ſneak and retreat into its holes and corners again. And ſhould the Church of *England* have been overthrownd and devoured, what an eaſie Prey would the reſt have been to the Romiſh Cormorants! And could the King, under the Conduct of the Jeſuits, and with the aſſiſtance of his *Myrmidons*, have diſſolved the eſtabliſhed Worſhip and Discipline,

cipline, they of the Separation would have been in no capacity to support the Reformed Religion, nor able to escape the common Ruine and Persecution. 'Tis therefore the Interest, as well as the Duty of the Dissenters, to help maintain and defend those Walls, within the skreen and shelter whereof their own Huts and Cottages are built and stand. And the rather seeing the Conformists are at last, though to their own Religion's, and the Nation's Expence, become so far enlightened, as to see a necessity of growing more amicable towards them, and to enlarge the Terms of their Communion, grant an Indulgence to all Protestants that differ from them. And as we ought to admire the Wisdom of God in those Providences, by which Protestants are taught to lay aside their Animosity, and to let fall their Persecutions of one another; so it would be a Contradiction both to the Principles and repeated Protestations of Dissenters, to aim at more than such a Liberty as is consistent with a National Ecclesiastick Establishment. What it were to proclaim themselves both Villains and Hypocrites, not to allow their Fellow-Protestants the Exercise of their Judgments, with what further Profits and Emoluments the Law will grant them, provided themselves may be discharged from all obnoxiousness to Penalties and Censures upon the account of their Consciences, and be admitted a free and publick Practice of their own respective Modes of Discipline, and be suffered to worship God in those ways which they think are best required and enjoyed them. And were England immediately to be rendered so happy as to have a Protestant Prince or Princess (as we are not now quite out of hopes) ascend the Throne, and to enjoy a Parliament duly chosen, and acting with freedom; no one Party of the Reformed Religion among us, must ever expect to be established and supported to the denial of Liberty to others, much less to be by Law empowered to ruine and destroy them. Should it please Almighty God, to bring the Princess of Orange to the Crown, though the Church of England may in that case justly expect the being preserved and upheld as the National Establishment, yet all other Protestants may very rationally promise themselves an Indulgence, and that not only from the Mildness and compassionate Sweetness of her Temper, but

from



from the Influence which the Prince her Husband will have upon her, who, as he is descended from Ancestors, whose Glory it was to be the Redeemers of their Country from Papal Persecution and Spanish Tyranny; so his Education, Generosity, Wisdom, and many Heroick Vertues, dispose him to embrace all Protestants with an equal Tenderneſs, and to erect his Interest upon the being Head and Patron of all that profess the Reformed Religion. Had the late Duke of *Monmouth* been victorious against the Forces of the present King, and inabled to have wrested the Scepter out of his Hand, though all Protestants might thereupon have expected, and would certainly have enjoyed an equal freedom, without the liableness of any Party to Penal Laws for matters of Religion, yet he would have been careful; and I have reason to believe that it was his purpose to have had the Church of *England* preserved and maintained, and that she should have suffered no alteration but what would have been to her Strength and Glory, through an enlargement of the Terms of her Communion, and what would have been to the Praise of her Moderation and Charity through her being perswaded to bear with such as differ from her in little things, and could not prevail with themselves to partake with her in all Ordinances. Upon the whole, it is both the prudence and safety of Dissenters, as they would escape Extirpation themselves, and have Religion conveyed down to Posterity, to unite their Strength and Endeavours to those of the Church of *England* for the upholding her against the assaults of Popish Enemies, who pursue her Subversion. As matters have been circumstanced and stated in *England*, there hath not been an Affront or Injury offered or done unto her by the Court, which did not at the same time reach and wound the Dissenters. 'Tis not her being for Episcopacy, Ceremonies, and imposed set-Forms of Worship, the Things about which she and the Nonconformists differ, that she hath been, not long since, maligned and struck at by the Men in Power, and his Popish *Juncto*; but it is for being Protestant, Reformed, and Orthodox, Crimes under the Guilt whereof Dissenters were equally concerned and involved. Being therefore in opposition to the common Cause of Religion, that the late Court of Inquisition was erected over her Ecclesiasticks,

satisfies, all Protestants jointly resent the Wrongs which she sustain'd, and not only to sympathize with those dignified and lower Clergy which were called to suffer, but to espouse her Quarrel with the same warmth that we would our own.

And as we are to look upon those of the Episcopal Communion, to be the great Bulwark of the Protestant Religion and Reformed Interest in *England*; so it was farther incumbent on Dissenters towards them, and a Duty which they owe to God, the Nation, and themselves, not to be accessory to any thing, through which the legal Establishment of the Church of *England* might have been, by any Act of pretended Regal Prerogative, weakened and supplanted.

I never counsel the Dissenters to renounce their Principles, nor to participate with the Prelatical Church in all Ordinances, on the Terms to which they have straitned and narrowed their Communion. For while they remain unsatisfied of the lawfulness of those Terms and Conditions, they cannot do it without offending God, and contracting Guilt upon their Souls; nor will they of the Church of *England* in Charity, Justice and Honesty, expect it from them. For whatsoever any Man believeth to be Sin, it is so to him, and will by God be imputed as such, till he be otherwise enlightened and convinced; nor are the Dissenters to be false and cruel to themselves, in order to be kind and friendly to them. But that which I would advise them unto is, that after the maintaining the highest measure of Love to the conformable Congregations as Churches of Christ, and the esteeming their Members as Christian Protestant Brethren, notwithstanding the several things wherein they judge them to err, and to be mistaken, that they would not by any Act and Transaction of theirs, betray them into a Despotical Power, nor directly, nor indirectly acknowledg any Authority paramount unto, and superceding the Laws, by which the Church of *England* is established in its present Form, Order, and Mode of Jurisdiction, Discipline and External Worship.

Whatsoever Ease arrived to the Dissenters, through the King's suspending the Execution of the Penal Laws, without their Address and Application, they might receive it with Joy and Humility in themselves, and with Thankfulness to God,

God, nor was there hereby any prejudice offered on their part to the Authority of the Law, or Offence or Injury given or done to the conformable Clergy. Nor is it without grief and regret that the Church-Men have been forced to behold the harassing, spoiling, and imprisonment of the Nonconformists, while in the mean time the Papists were suffered to assemble to the Celebration of their Idolatrous Worship without Censure and Controul. And had it been in their power to remedy it, and give Relief to their Protestant Brethren, they would with delight and readiness have embrac'd the occasion and opportunity of doing it. But alas! instead of having an advantage put into their hand, of contributing to the Relief of the Dissenters, which I dare say, many of them ardently wish and desire, they were compelled, contrary to their Inclination, as well as their Interest, to become instrumental in persecuting and oppressing them. Nor does the late King cover a better and a more legal advantage against the Conformists, than that they would refuse to pursue Dissenters, and decline molesting them with Ecclesiastical Censures and civil Punishments. So that their condition was to be pitied and bewailed, in that they were hindered from acting against the Papists, though both enjoy'd by Law, and influenced thereunto by Motives of self-Preservation, as well as by ties of Conscience, while in the mean time they were forced to prosecute their fellow-Protestants, or else to be suspended and deposed, and put out of their Offices and Employments. And tho I believe that they would at last have more Peace in themselves, and be better accepted with God in the great Day of their Account, should they have refused to disturb and prosecute their Protestant Brethren, and scorn to be any longer Court-Tools for weakening and undermining the Reformed Cause and Interest, yet I could not but leave them to act in this as they should be perswaded in themselves, and as they judg'd most agreeable to Principles of Wisdom and Conscience. In the interim, the Dissenters have all the Reason in the World to believe, that the Proceedings of the Clergy and Members of the Church of *England* against them, were not the Results of their Election and Choice, but the Effects of moral Compulsion and Necessity. Nor will any Dissenter

that is prudent and discreet, blame them for a matter which they cannot help, but bear his Misfortune and Lot with Patience in himself, and with Compassion and Charity towards them; and have his Indignation raised only against that Court, which forced them to be instrumental in their Oppression and Trouble. The Protestant Dissenters could not be so far void of sense, as to think that the Person lately in the Throne bore them any good-Will, but his drift was to scruce himself into a Supremacy and Absoluteness over the Law, and to get such an Authority confessed to be vested in him, as when he pleased he might subvert the Established Religion and set up Popery. For the same Power that he can dispense with the Penal Statutes against the Nonconformists, he may also dispense with those against the Roman Catholics. And whosoever owneth that he hath a Right to do the first, doth in effect own that he hath a Right to do the last. For if he be allowed a Power for the superceding some Laws made in reference to Matters of Religion, he may challenge the like Power for the superceding others of the same kind. And then by the same Authority that he can suspend the Laws against Popery, he may also suspend those for Proteftancy. And by the same Power that he can, in defiance of Law, indulge the Papists the Exercise of their Religion in Houses, he may establish them in the publick Celebration of their Idolatry in Churches and Cathedrals. Yea, whereas the Laws that relate to Religion are enacted by no less Authority, than those that are made for the Preservation of our Civil Rights, should the King be admitted to have an Arbitrary Power over the one, it is very like that by the Logick of *White-hall* he might have challeng'd the same Absoluteness over the other. Nor do I doubt but that the *eleven Judges*, who gratified him with a Despoticalness over the former, would, when required, grant him the same over the latter; I know the Dissenters have been under no small Temptations, both by reason of being hindred from enjoying the Ordinances of the Gospel, and because of many grievous Calamities which they suffer for their Nonconformity, of making Applications to the King for some Relief by his suspending the Execution of the Laws; but they must give me leave to add,



add, that they ought not for the obtaining of a little Ease, to have betrayed the Kingdom, and sacrifice the legal Constitution of the Government to the Lust and Pleasure of a Popish Prince, whom nothing less would serve than being Absolute and Despotical. And had he once been in the quiet Possession of an Authority to dispense with the Penal Laws, the Dissenters would not long have enjoyed the benefit of it. Nor could they have denied him a Power of reviving the Execution of the Law, which is part of the Trust deposited with him as Supream Magistrate, who have granted him a Power of suspending the Laws, which the Rules of the Government precluded him from. And as he might whensoever he pleased, cause the Laws, to which they were obnoxious, to be executed upon them, so by virtue of having an Authority acknowledged in him of superceding the Laws, he might deprive them of the liberty of meeting together to the number of five, a Grace which the Parliament thought fit to allow them, under all the other Severities to which they were subjected. Nor needs there any further Evidence, that the Princes challenging such a Power was an Usurpation, and that the Subjects making any Application by which it seem'd allowed to him, was a betraying of the ancient legal Government of the Kingdom; whereas the most obsequious and servile Parliament to the Court that ever *England* knew, not only deny'd this Prerogative to the late King *Charles*, but made him renounce it by revoking his Declaration of Indulgence which he had emitted *Anno 1672*.

And as it will be to the perpetual Honour of some of the Dissenters to have chosen rather to suffer the Severities which the Laws make them liable unto, than by any Act and Transaction of theirs, to undermine and weaken either the Church or the State; so it will be a means both of endearing them, we hope, not only to the Prince of *Orange*, now by a miraculous Providence brought in amongst us, but to future Parliaments, and of bringing them and the Conformists into an union of Counsels and Endeavours against Popery and Tyranny for ever; which is at this season a thing so indispensably necessary for their common preservation. Especially when though a new and more threatening Alliance and Confederacy with

*France,*

France, than that he, the King had not only engaged to assist by all possible Measures towards Protestants in England, which that Monarch hath vouchsafed the World a Pattern and Copy of in his carriage towards those of the Reformed Religion in France; but had promised to disturb the Peace and Repose of his Neighbours, and to commence a War, in conjunction with that Prince, against Foreign Protestants. Nor as the Kings giving Liberty and Protection to the *Algerines* to frequent his Havens, and sell the Prizes which they take from the *Dutch*, is both a most infamous Action for a Prince, pretending to be a Christian, and a direct violation of his Alliance with the *States General*; so nothing can be more evident, than that he thereby sought to render them the weaker for him to assault, and that he was resolved (if some unforeseen and extraordinary Providence had not interposed and prevented) to declare War against them the next Summer; in order whereunto great Remises of Money were already ordered him from the French Court. So that the Indulgence which he pretends to be inclinable to afford the Dissenters, was not an effect of Kindness and Good-will, but an Artifice whereby to oblige their Assistance in destroying those Abroad of the same Religion with themselves. Which if he could once compass, it were easy to foresee what Fate both the Dissenters, and they of the Communion of the Church of England, were to expect. Who as they would not then have known whither to retreat for shelter; so they would have been destitute of Comfort in themselves, and deprived of Pity from others; not only for having, through their Divisions, made themselves a Prey to the Papists at Home, but for having been accessary to the Ruin of the Reformed State Abroad; and which was the *Asylum* and Sanctuary of all those that were elsewhere oppressed and persecuted for Religion.

*Gloria Deo Optimo, Maximo.*

*Honos Principi nostri celsissimo, piatissimo.*

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A  
Specimen of a Bill,

For UNITING

PROTESTANTS:

BEING

A rough Draught of such Terms, as seem equal for the *Conformist* to grant, and the *Non-conformist* to yield to, for Peace sake; Provided a good while, and Published on purpose only for the farther, better, and more easy Consideration of the *Parliament*.

W<sup>H</sup>ereas, there are many Jealousies risen about *Papery*, which makes it even necessary to the peace of the Nation, that the *Protestant* Interest be united and strengthened by all Good and Lawful Means: And to this end, there being this one proper Expedient, to wit, The removing the Occasion of Divisions,

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which

which several persons do find to themselves in those late Injunctions, which yet were intended to the same purpose of Concord in the Nation: Be it Enacted, ——— That an Explanation of these Impositions, and such Allevations, be allowed to the tenderly Considerate, and peaceably Scrupulous, as follow.

In the *Act of Uniformity*, By the Declaration of Assent and Consent to all things, and every Thing contained in, and prescribed by the two Books of Common-Prayer, and of Order-

*These Materials were provided, during the Sitting of that Parliament which passed the Act of Uniformity, and other the like Rigorous Acts; and are therefore drawn up in the form of an Explanatory Bill, because it was supposed, they were not like to Repeal their own Acts, though they might be got to Interpret them. But now we have a New Parliament, and that after another also Dissolved, we may expect quicker Work: Yet will the Proposing these Things still in view, have their use, both for suppressing such as have said, The Nonconformists know not what they would have, & setting some Measure to our own desires, and the Parliam. Condescensions about the same.*

*ing Priests and Deacons*, we understand not, that these Books are in every Minute particular, infallible, or free from that Defect, which is incident to all Human Composure: But that they are in the main Contents, to be sincerely approved and used. And we do therefore allow this Declaration to be sufficient, if it be made to the use of the Book, in the Ordinary Constant Lords-Day-Service, notwithstanding any Exceptions some may have against some Things in the By-Offices, and Occasional Service, the Rybrick, and otherwise. And for the Ceremonies which are made, and

have been always, and on all hands, held to be only indifferent Things, we think fit that they be left to the Consciences and prudence of Ministers, and People, every where (excepting the *Cathedrals*) to use them, or forbear them, as they judge it most meet for their own and others Edification: provided, that if any person will have his Child Baptised with the Sign of the Cross, or stands upon any thing else, hitherto required by the Service-Book, if the Minister himself scruple the performance, he shall permit another to do it.



In the same *Act*, By those Words in the *Subscription*, that *It is not lawful to take Arms against the King, upon any Pretence whatsoever*; we intend no new or strange Thing, but the Rightful Maintenance only of the King's Authority against Rebellion, according to the common determination of Learned Writers, in the Case of Subjection to Princes. By the Words, *I abhor the Position of taking Arms by the Authority of the King, against any Commissioned by Him*, we never thought of Advancing the Arbitrary Commissions of the King above Law; but by those *Commissioned by Him*, we understand such as are Legally Commissioned, and in the Legal pursuit of such Commissions. By the Clause which follows, that requires a Renunciation of all *Endeavour of any Alteration of Government in the Church or State*, we never meant to deny any Free-born Subject his Right, of Choosing *Parliament-Men*, or Acting in his place for the Common Good any way, according to Law; but that he shall Renounce all such *Endeavour*, as is Seditious, or not warranted by the Constitution of the Nation; and particularly, such an *Endeavour* as was Assumed in the late Times, without, and against the Consent of the King: And for the rest of the *Subscription*, which is enjoined but to the Year 1682. Be it Enacted, that it cease presently, and be no longer enjoined.

And forasmuch as there is an Oath prescribed and required of all *Non-conformist Preachers*, that reside in any Corporate-Town, by a certain *Act* of the former *Parliament*, made at Oxford in the 17th Year of His now Majesties Reign, Entitled, *An Act for restraining Non-*

*That we have our Reason for these Interpretations, any one may see that please in those Arguments against the Oxford Oath, and this Subscription which are offered in a little Book, Entitled, The Peaceable Design, so that we can by no means submit thereto, without them. There is moreover this Clause [And I will conform to the Liturgy of the Church, as it is by Law Established] we desire may be spared, because upon our Declaration before of Assent and Consent, (which must be the Bounds of our Sense thereof) it is needless altogether, and can serve but for a Snare only to Mens Consciences.*

*This Oath is of the same Contents with the Subscription before; and to impose both, is nothing else but the multiplying Wrath, and laying Lead on the already Laden.*

conformists, from inhabiting Corporations: We do further declare, That it shall suffice any Man, for the Enjoyment of his Free-born Liberty, of Inhabiting where he thinks best; and serve him also instead of the fore-mentioned Subscription; to take that Oath in this form of Words following.

1. A. B. do swear, That I hold it unlawful upon any pretence, to take Arms against the King, His Government or Laws: And that I disclaim that dangerous Position, of taking Arms by his Authority, against His Person, or any Legally Commissionated by him, in the Legal pursuit of such Commissions: And that I will not endeavour any Alteration of Government in the Church or State, in any way or manner, not warranted by the Constitution of the Kingdom, or any otherwise than by Act of Parliament. And as soon as any Man hath taken the Oath thus, he shall be discharged of all penalty for his omission before.

We do declare moreover, That whereas it is required also in the Act of Uniformity, that every Minister who enjoys any Living or Ecclesiastical preferment, shall be Ordained by a Bishop; and there are several persons of late, who in case of Necessity, for want of Bishops took Presbyterian Orders: Our meaning is not in any wise to disgust the Reformed Churches beyond the Seas; and make it necessary for such to be Re-ordained to the Office; but that they receive this Second imposition of Hands to the Exercise of their Office in the new charge, unto which they are, or shall be called; and that the Bishop shall frame his Words accordingly.

*There is Reordination ad Officium, which (we say) is generally decried by Divines: Re-ordinatio ad Exercitium particulare, which may be irrefragably proved from Acts 13. 2, 3. with Acts 14. 26. and consequently allow'd to serve this Occasion.*

And whereas there is a Subscription also in the Canons, and the Canonical Oath of Obedience, imposed on most Ministers by the Bishops, that have given some of the greatest

greatest Occasion to *Non-conformity* heretofore; which yet never passed into Law by any Act of *Parliament*: We do further declare, That nothing more of that kind shall be required of Ministers henceforward, then was made and held necessary by the Act of the *thirteenth of Elizabeth*.

*Church subscribed, and the Declaration before to the Common Prayer, made; we see no need of boyling over these three Things again for us, in the Canons.*

*If the Oaths of Supremacy and Allegiance be taken and the Articles of the*

" And in regard there hath been great Offence taken by Conscientious Ministers, at the Bishops, (or their Courts) commanding them to read the Sentence of Excommunication against some or other of their Parish, for such faults as they think not at all worthy of so great a Censure: We declare it but a just Thing, that every Minister be first satisfied in the Cause, or else be exempted from the Execution of that Charge; and that the Bishop (or his Court) provide some other person that is satisfied about it, to do it.

*Neither shall any Minister be punishable for the withholding his own Act in delivery of either Sacrament to any, who in his Conscience be judges unworthy, or*

unexpable of it. As we think there is no Elder in the New Testament, who is not a Pastor, and that there is no Lay Pastor; so do we account, that there is no Pastor or Presbyter, but such as have the power both to Rule and Teach, committed to them by Christ: Yet do we, for all that, apprehend it not only Lawful, but Expedient, for the ordinary Ministers of our Parochial Congregations, (when the Church is National) to commit part of their charge, (so wis that of Ruling) in Actu Secundo, to some few among them, who are more Eminently fitted for the Work, (that is, the *οἱ καλῶς ὑποσώτρεις*) and consequently to the Bishop: So that, if this Fundamental Right of Governing their own Flocks, be but acknowledged to Reside in every Presbyter, by granting so much to us as this (and what hath preceded) comes to, we shall be unwilling to fall off from Episcopacy, upon the points of Ordination and Jurisdiction.

And to the intent, that a free search after Truth may not be discouraged in the pursuit of Concord; and many other Scruples avoided upon that Account: We declare, that though an *Authentick* Interpretation be required, as to the Substance of all Laws, yet in the Articles of the Church, which are *Theses* for Agreement, and not Laws) and the *Homilies*,

The Authentick Interpretation of an Article, is the

meaning of the Major Part of the Convocation: A Doctrinal Interpretation, is the meaning of any one of the Doctors there present, (and consequently of any other Learned Expositor) who are supposed to have the Liberty to abound in their own Sense, so long as they can agree in the Words of the Article Establish'd. And this Clause therefore we put in upon Mature Consideration, in regard more especially to the Conscientious Latitudinarians, (which is a Name abused) who being some Arminian, and some Calvinian, cannot otherwise Subscribe the Doctrine of the same Theses, as the Reader may see more in such a sort of Book as this, called The Healing Paper, out of which this Bill for Union is Collected.

And because the very Superintendency of Bishops, and that Subjection to them which is required by the Constitution of the Realm, is, or may be an hinderance to many sober Ministers, and other Protestants, of coming into the Church, who are ready to consent to the Doctrine, but not to the Discipline or Government of it: We do declare, That so long as any person or party do acknowledge the King's Supremacy, as Head of the Church in this Nation, and obey their Ordinary, or the Bishops, in *Licitis & Honestis*, upon the Account of his Authority (committed to them for the Exercise of that External Regiment *Circa Sacra* which is granted by all our Divines, to the Higher Powers in every Nation,) it is enough for the owning *Episcopal Jurisdiction* (so far as they do own it, in the Declaration of Assent and Consent, or in any other part of Conformity;) and shall serve them to all intents and purposes in Law, no less than a professed belief and acknowledgment of the immediate Divine Right of it.

That is, Although there be some that cannot acknowledge; our Diocesan Prelates to be Christs Officers, distinct from the Elders in scripture, yet so long as they can live Peaceable lives

in Obedience to them, as Ecclesiastical Magistrates under His Majesty, for the keeping the several Congregations in their Precincts, to that Gospel Order, which themselves allow, and for super-vising their Constitutions in Things indifferent, that nothing be done, but in Subordination to the Peace of the Kingdom, (which is a Notion wherein the Judicious of every Party may acquiesce, and expressed by us in these very Words in a Book, forenamed) it is sufficient unto National Church-Union.

Be it therefore Enacted by this present Parliament, That if any Person be willing to Conform to the present Establishment



ment of the *Church of England*, and her Service appointed according to these *Explanations*, *Alleviations*, *Declarations*, *Lenitives*, or *Cautions*, he shall be admitted to any Ecclesiastical Preferment, and enjoy the use of his Ministry without any molestation: All Statutes, Canons, or Laws to the contrary notwithstanding.

And for the making this Act of better Signification to the Concerned, and the prevention of that Scandal which is raised on the Clergy, through the Covetousness of some, in heaping up to themselves all the Preferments they can get, when others have scarce Subsistence for their Families, and the Souls of many people are thereby neglected: Be it farther Enacted, That no

Clergy-man for the Three next years ensuing, be suffered to Enjoy any more than one Living or Cure of Souls, and one Dignity, (or other Ecclesiastical Preferment) at one Time; and that every Man (without Exception) that hath more than One of Either, shall immediately give

*We propose these Things, we confess, as if we were in Republica Platonis, but we should be glad to see any Fruits of this kind; as those who are in Face Romuli may expect. What is Right and Just, and ought to be done, is one thing, and to be sought; though what is like to be done, or will be done, is another.*

up the Rest to be distributed among those who shall be brought off from their *Non-conformity*, upon the Terms of this Act into the Established Order. Which that they may also be obtained, and possessed with a clean Conscience, and that grievous Corruption of *Simony* may be extirpate out of the Land: Be it Enacted moreover, That every Patron that shall henceforward present his Clerk to any Living, shall have the Oath called *The Simonical Oath*, imposed on himself, no less than on the Incumbent: And if he Refuses to take it, that then the Bishop shall have immediate Power (taking only the same Oath) of Presentation in his Room.

And forasmuch, as there are some Ministers of a good Life, that cannot (according to their Judgments) allow of our Parochial Churches, nor a Book of *Liturgy*: But do choose to Worship God, and Jesus Christ, in the way of their gathered or separate Congregations; and crave the protection

There are two  
Parts of this  
Bill: One for  
Concord on  
Coalition with  
all such as can  
join in Parochi-  
al Communion,  
in the Clauses  
before: The  
other for For-  
bearance of  
those that can-  
not, in this last  
Clause. For  
what shall we  
do with such?  
We will not  
force them by  
the Head. They

Protection and Clemency of the King, upon their Allegiance, as other Subjects: Be it finally Enacted for the better settling and quiet of the Realm, and the Reducing of their minds to other means than those which have hitherto proved unsuccessful, That every Christian Subject throughout the Land that profess the Reformed Religion, and be not convicted of Treason, be pardoned all Faults and Penalties incurred upon the account of any Fore-past Nonconformity; and that they shall not, during these seven Years next ensuing, be prosecuted upon any Penal Law for their Consciences, in the matter of Religion; They carrying themselves innocently and peaceably, with submission to the Civil, and without disturbance to the Ecclesiastical Government, now settled in the Nation: All Penalties to the contrary notwithstanding.

And by a further Act of Parliament, at a Convention, held at Westminster, the said Bill was read, and the same was distinguished.

Repeal of our Laws about Conformity unto the year of Elizabeth: Or, a New Act of Uniformity: One of the King's Declaration concerning Ecclesiastical Affairs at his first coming in, turned into a Law, were Comprehension.

His latter Declaration to all his Loving Subjects, concerning few things in both, yet a little considered, made for more Indulgence.

A Bill for Comprehension with Indulgence, both together, will do our business: An Addition, or Clause in the said Bill, will do it with Supererogation.

One, God bless the King, and the People, and the Church, and the State, and the Kingdom, and the Nation, and the World, and the Universe, and the whole Creation, Amen. Deo Gloria.